Lockheed Martin Selects Aegisound For Mentor-Protege Agreement On Advanced Hearing Protection Devices For F-35 Operations

Lockheed Martin has entered a Department of Defense Mentor-Protege Agreement with Aegisound, LLC, of Blacksburg, Va., and will assist the company as it becomes a supplier of advanced hearing-protection devices for military high-noise environments, such as Naval carrier launch operations.

In the Mentor-Protege relationship, Lockheed Martin Aeronautics will help Aegisound, a Historically Underutilized Business Zone (HUBZone) company, develop its capabilities for defense, aerospace and commercial markets during a three-year period, working through the U.S. Navy Mentor-Protege office.

"We are committed to providing opportunities to small businesses. They bring innovation and creativity, and a focus on cost, schedule and quality -- essential elements of meeting our customers' requirements," said Gary Bailey, vice president of Material Management for Lockheed Martin Aeronautics. "Lockheed Martin will work toward developing Aegisound into a first-class supplier, capable of producing the most sophisticated hearing protection devices available today," Bailey said.

Aegisound's hearing-protection devices, developed for the F-35 Lightning II program, resemble stereo headphones but employ state-of-the-art active-noise-reduction technologies. The next-generation devices will replace legacy hearing-protection devices that are based on 50-year-old technology. The new devices will be worn on deck by aircraft carrier personnel during catapult launches and maintenance activities. Hearing protection devices have been standard equipment on flight decks for decades.

"Aegisound is honored to have the opportunity to participate in the Lockheed Martin Mentor-Protege program," said Dr. Gary Gibbs, chief operating officer of Aegisound.

As part of the Mentor-Protege initiative, Lockheed Martin will team with Morehouse College, a Historically Black College/University. The Morehouse College Entrepreneurship Center in Atlanta, Ga., will join with Lockheed Martin to provide training, mentoring and consultancy to Aegisound.

Headquartered in Bethesda, Md., Lockheed Martin is a global security company that employs about 140,000 people worldwide and is principally engaged in the research, design, development, manufacture, integration and sustainment of advanced technology systems, products and services. The corporation reported 2007 sales of $41.9 billion.

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